



## ALASKA REGION

---

The total FY 2001 budget request for National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) is \$657.0 million, including \$455.4 million for base programs and \$201.6 million in associated funding. The FY 2001 request represents a net increase over FY 2000 funds of \$38.8 million for base programs and \$79.6 million for associated programs. This fact sheet highlights the cross-cut of requests beneficial to the science and management of living marine resources in NOAA Fisheries' Alaska Region. Additional regional and national fact sheets detailing NOAA Fisheries programmatic requests are also available.

*Who is Alaska NOAA Fisheries?* Alaska's coastal and marine ecosystems support an abundance of fish, shellfish, marine mammals, and seabirds. Alaska's upland landscape is frequently characterized as being immense, untamed, and unique. Approximately 42 percent of the nation's surface freshwater occurs in Alaska. Alaska's commercial marine fisheries are world-renowned for their sustainable productivity. With 34,000 miles of tidal marine coastline and about 70% of the U.S. continental shelf, the Alaska marine fisheries area contributes 52% of the total U.S. landings annually. The commercial fishing industry is the largest private-sector employer in Alaska, providing 47% of basic employment. Recreational fisheries are also important to Alaska residents and visitors. In 1997, recreational fishermen spent about 2.6 million angler days to catch over 2.3 million salmon and 673,000 halibut.

*Alaska's Bountiful Fisheries.* Fisheries in Alaska are among the most well managed and sustainably harvested in the world. In concert with the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, this successful management occurs under five Federal fishery management plans (FMPs) designed to protect the resource and maintain healthy stocks important to commercial, recreational, and subsistence fisheries. Of the more than 45 species and species complexes managed under the FMPs, just three species of crab are considered to be overfished. NOAA Fisheries manages the largest Individual Fishing Quota program (sablefish and halibut) in the nation, and a unique Community Development Quota program for coastal communities. These programs, as well as the new cooperative programs under the American Fisheries Act, successfully attain benefits of a market-based allocation scheme while protecting the interests of small-scale fishermen and coastal fishing communities.

### AT A GLANCE: ALASKA

Item	Increase
Norton Sound fisheries failure	\$5.0M
Cook Inlet Beluga whales	\$0.1M
Steller Sea Lion Recovery Activities	\$0.26M
Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Account	\$8.5M
Pacific Salmon Treaty - Northern Fund	\$10.0M
Juneau, AK, facility construction	\$1.0M
Finish construction of first new FRV	\$8.3M

For Further Information Contact:  
The National Marine Fisheries Service  
Peter Hill, legislative Affairs (301) 713-2263  
Laurel Bryant, Constituent Affairs (301) 713-2259 or  
[www.nmfs.gov](http://www.nmfs.gov)



*Protecting and Recovering Our Marine Species and Habitats.* NOAA Fisheries is responsible for protecting several species of marine mammals and all marine fish species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. We are effectively using co-management agreements with Native groups to conserve marine mammals and their habitats. The FY2001 request includes an increase of \$100 thousand to support NMFS' proposed designation of Cook Inlet beluga whales as a depleted stock under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, with consideration for continued authorization of Native subsistence harvest. We are cooperatively developing a national plan for reducing seabird mortality in commercial longline fisheries. Potential adverse impacts on essential fish habitat are continually being mitigated. We are conducting research critical to understanding the causes of severe declines in the Steller sea lion populations, while monitoring the effectiveness of management plans implemented to protect Stellar sea lions and allow commercial fishing activities to co-exist. Lastly, Alaska is key to implementing the Pacific Salmon Treaty to restore and enhance salmon habitat and stocks in both the U.S. and Canada. The FY 2001 request will provide an additional \$10 million for the Northern fund to implement responsibilities under this treaty, and \$8.5 million in Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery funds bringing the total to \$22.5 million to support cooperative initiatives with the State.

*Future Challenges.* Alaska has a resource extraction based economy. Human settlements, oil and gas exploration and extraction, mining, fishing and fish processing, hydroelectric development, and timber harvest can have undesirable effects on the health and abundance of living marine resources NOAA fisheries is charged by legislation to protect. This responsibility is growing more and more complex, with increasing demands for scientific data necessary to implement existing statutes. Managers and scientists are struggling with significant data gaps in several areas, including ecosystems structure and function, socio-economic impacts, program level analyses, ocean floor mapping, and effects on competing species. And there is an ongoing need for additional stock assessments, observer programs, and harvest measurements. To be present in this huge and sometimes dangerous ocean area to collect detailed and relevant data requires durable ships and dedicated scientists who can return to well supplied laboratories. The FY2001 request includes \$1 million toward completion of the proposed research facility in Juneau to replace the aging Auke Bay lab and expand research activities, and \$8.3 million to finish construction of the first new fisheries research vessel, slated for research off Alaska.

*Our Management Partners.* Alaska NOAA Fisheries works in partnership with the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, conducting the scientific research and analyses on which to develop management strategies, and advising the Council on the five Fishery Management Plans under their jurisdiction. NOAA Fisheries and the Council are currently working on conservation of Steller sea lions by time/area management of the pollock fishery, implementation of the American Fisheries Act, launching of the License Limitation Program, annual approval of research priorities, and designating habitat areas of particular concern.

